

Child Nutrition Programs: Summer Food Service Program and Seamless Summer Option Grab and Go Frequently Asked Questions

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This FAQ document is to assist School Food Authorities (SFAs) and Sponsors with guidance on the administration and operation of Grab and Go (GNG) meal service in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO).

Q1: Where can a sponsor provide GNG meals?

A1: In rural areas that do not have congregate meal service.

Q2: I already operate a normal (congregate) meal service program, can I also operate a GNG at the same location?

A2: Maybe. GNG cannot be provided when congregate meal service is available, but GNG can be provided when congregate meal service is not available.

Allowable examples:

- A site that offers breakfast with a congregate meal service may be approved to provide a lunch GNG meal service.
- A site that offers lunch and breakfast three days a week may provide GNG for the days with no congregate meal service, including weekends.
- A site that offers lunch and breakfast congregate meals for most of the summer but stops congregate meal service for a week over Independence Day, may provide GNG during the break for up to five days.

Q3: How is an area determined to be rural (SFSP)?

A3: SFSP regulations (7 CFR 225.2) defines a 'rural' area as: (a) any area in a county which is not part of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) or (b) any "pocket" within a (MSA) which is determined to be geographically isolated from urban areas.

- The best option to determine if the site is rural or urban is to utilize the Rural Designation Map: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/rural-designation>.

Q4: How is a site determined to be area eligible?

A4: Normal area eligibility rules apply. A site is determined eligible based on the [USDA Area Eligibility Mapper](#), at least 50% school free and reduced site eligibility data (for CEP schools, the site must have a 50% Identified Student Percentage (ISP)), or the completion of a Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application by the child's parent/ guardian. If using the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Applications, the SFA or Sponsor needs to ensure that the applications are completed fully and approved correctly. When Free and Reduced-Price Applications are used to determine area eligibility, only meals served to approved Free and Reduced-Price students may be claimed for free reimbursement. Paid student meals cannot be claimed for reimbursement.

Q5: What models of GNG are allowed?

A5: Home Delivery and Meal Pick-Up options may be used.

- Home Delivery: Meals are delivered or shipped to homes. SFAs or non-SFA sponsors that have a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with an SFA to use that SFA's student data as the basis for establishing their eligible population, may deliver meals to homes.

- Meal Pick-Up: Provide packed meals that children can take to eat later.

Q6: What are the requirements for Home Delivery?

A6: For meals to be delivered to a child's home, the SFA or Sponsor must obtain written consent from the eligible child's parent or guardian prior to the delivery of meals using the [CANS Home Delivery Consent form](#). Sponsors must confirm the household's current contact information and number of eligible children to ensure that the correct number of meals are delivered. Children do not need to be present for home delivered meals, however, someone must be present to receive any meals that are not shelf stable. Meals can be mailed or shipped through a delivery service, or hand delivered by sponsor staff, volunteers, or others. If meals are mailed or shipped, all food components must be shelf stable.

Q7: Can meals be distributed to a parent or guardian at a GNG pick-up site?

A7: No. Children must be present for meal pick-ups.

Q8: What are the food health and safety standards for GNG?

A8: All meals must meet food health and safety standards. Cold foods must be kept cold, and hot foods kept hot. Food packaging must maintain proper temperature through the delivery period. The SFA or Sponsor must consider household access to cold storage and reheating when planning multiple meals (for example: does the family have a refrigerator/freezer that the food will fit into; do they have a microwave or oven to reheat food).

Q9: Is there any additional funding for GNG?

A9: No. However, expenses related to meal delivery can be considered an allowable cost under SFSP and SSO. Delivery costs can also be paid with non-program funds.

Q10: Are SFAs and Sponsors required to follow meal patterns for GNG meals?

A10: Yes. All meals served for reimbursement must meet the meal pattern requirements for SFSP or SSO. Offer versus serve (OVS) is only allowed for SFAs with CANS approval if all meal components or food items are offered, and the participants have the opportunity to select a reimbursable meal. OVS is not available for non-SFAs.

Q11: How many meals per child may be provided through GNG?

A11: Up to two meals or one meal and one snack, per child, per day may be offered in any combination except lunch and supper. Multiple days may be provided up to a 5-day period. Bulk distribution is allowed.

Q12: Are second meals reimbursable for GNG?

A12: No.

Q13: Are the other normal SFSP and SSO requirements still in effect at GNG sites?

A13: Yes, all normal program requirements remain in effect, such as, participant eligibility, site caps, meal service times, health and food safety, civil rights, special diet modifications, student eligibility confidentiality, and announcing summer feeding sites.

- For more information on Summer Food Service Program operations visit:
<https://doe.sd.gov/cans/sfsp.aspx>
- For more information on Seamless Summer Option operations visit:
<https://doe.sd.gov/cans/snp.aspx> under the "School Meal Programs Resources" section.

Q14: Are SFAs and Sponsors required to post the “And Justice for All” (AJFA) poster at their GNG site or Home Delivery method?

A14: Yes. The poster must be prominently displayed.

Q15: Where can I find more information about Grab and Go meal service?

A15: A full listing of questions and answers from the USDA can be found in the USDA Food and Nutrition Service [memo SFSP 01-2023, SP 05-2023 Implementation Guidance: Summer 2023 Non-Congregate Meal Service in Rural Areas](#).